

700-20000
July 22, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
July 22, 1959 -- 11:45 AM

Others present: Vice President Nixon
Secretary Dillon
Major Eisenhower

The President opened by giving the Vice President a piece of correspondence from Prime Minister Macmillan containing advice on how to deal with the Soviet personalities in his forthcoming trip. To place his view in perspective, the President quoted a question he had received in Press Conference this morning asking what the President would like Mr. Nixon to ask Khrushchev. The President had pointed out that the Vice President constitutionally has a position of his own and goes on such missions only at the request and as a representative of the President. He is not a normal part of the negotiating machinery. With regard to his exact schedule, the Vice President confirmed that he plans to visit Poland on the way back from Moscow and has no plans to go to Paris.

The President mentioned a letter he had received recommending that he make a one-day trip to Paris on August 25th, the 15th anniversary of the liberation of that city by forces under his command.

Mr. Dillon said that Couve de Murville had had discussion with Secretary Herter. Couve had expressed a desire for a Western heads of government meeting after the finish of the Geneva conference. Couve's estimate was that September would be a good month. Such a meeting would afford an opportunity for the President and General de Gaulle to get together. The President said that everybody seems to feel that a meeting of the principals in this case would solve all problems. He himself is of the opinion that such is not the case and that de Gaulle is primarily seeking prestige. Mr. Dillon pointed out, with respect to the Vice President stopping in Paris, that once his plane had refueled in Poland, it would be impossible to use operational considerations

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as an excuse for stopping in Paris. Poland is as close by the airways to Iceland as is Paris. The President said his idea is not important but because of the touchiness of de Gaulle he was looking for the chance for somebody to pay some amenities to him.

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The President then described the note he had received from Khrushchev last evening. In his own letter, delivered to Kozlov, the President suggested that if things go well at Geneva, a personal exchange prior to a Summit Meeting might be useful. Khrushchev's reply had allowed no link between results at Geneva and a Summit Meeting. The President advised Mr. Nixon, however, that he need not take this matter up unless Khrushchev does so himself. The President calculates that the answer to the Kozlov note will not arrive in Moscow before Mr. Nixon because he is studying the matter rather carefully prior to writing. It may arrive before Mr. Nixon leaves. He then read his draft reply to the Khrushchev letter in its present form.



Mr. Nixon asked if the President desires to link the idea of exchange of visits with the idea of a Summit Meeting. The President said it was more important to link exchange of visits with progress at Geneva and agreed that the prospect of exchange visits is being used as a prod to progress at Geneva. The President's initial idea had been to meet with Khrushchev now to prod the foreign ministers. However, this had been discouraged by his advisors. He told Mr. Nixon that he could stress the adverse psychological effects in the United States of any scheme whereby the President would appear to go to a Summit Meeting under ultimatum.

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Mr. Nixon then requested guidance in the event Khrushchev asks for the President's definition of the word "progress." The President said progress would mean assurance of our rights in Berlin, plus the setting up of machinery to study the overall problem. He admitted that this machinery could be amorphous in nature. As an example of the kind he has in mind, the President cited our proposal for a continuation of the meeting of the foreign offices with German advisors. This could be set up by the foreign ministers and confirmed

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that he would like to find soon a reasonable excuse for a Summit Meeting.

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A's to tactics in dealing with the Russians, the President recommended a cordial, almost light, atmosphere, He said the Vice President can probably expect to be filled up with the same old line. To this, Mr. Nixon expressed his intention of debating with Khrushchev and countering his points. He feels he has an excellent chance to probe and cause some blurring out of Khrushchev's real feelings. He also said he hopes to lay to rest some of Khrushchev's misconceptions about America, particularly with regard to the familiar line that the American people want peace but their leaders do not. He would point out that the reason that our Parties are unified in foreign policy is that our people believe the way our leaders do.

The President agreed to this and pointed out how we have changed our view of the Soviet people over the last three years. In 1956 we pictured them as sullen and discouraged. Now we have discovered that, despite their governmental system, they are able to maintain a high morale.



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Mr. Nixon expects that the Poles will announce the fact that he is visiting their country. The trip to Poland, he feels, will be very helpful, particularly since he will have the unusual privilege of talking with Gomulka. In Russia, he feels an important matter will be his opportunity to see the icebreaker Lenin. For this purpose he is taking Admiral Rickover along. |.....

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Finally, the President advised Mr. Nixon not to be afraid to talk substantive matters and to be positive with the Soviets in his conversations with Khrushchev.

John S D Eisenhower
John S. D. Eisenhower

